DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 320 837 SO 020 964

AUTHOR Hodge, R. Lewis
TITLE Middle School Citizenship Education: A Study of Civic Values via R. Freeman Butts' Decalogue.
PUB DATE 90
NOTE 16p.; Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the American Educational Research Association (Boston, MA, April 16-20, 1990).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Citizenship Education; Educational Research; Junior High Schools; *Middle Schools; Social Studies; Teaching Styles; *Values Education
IDENTIFIERS *Butts (R Freeman)

ABSTRACT

Citizenship education is one of the most common curriculum elements in the nation, thus clarifying the nature of citizenship education would partially qualify a common purpose in public schools. A supposition of this research is that public schools are the best way to advance democracy in a pluralistic United States. R. Freeman Butts, an advocated for strengthening the teaching of democracy, offers 10 civic values as the common core of U.S. citizenship: justice; freedom; equality; diversity; authority; privacy; due process; participation; personal obligation for the public good (loyalty, patriotism, discipline, and duty); and international human rights. In this study conducted in a metropolitan area middle school two teachers were observed. The sixth grade social studies teacher used a direct approach, while the eighth grade American History teacher used a more interactive style. The data were collected during classroom observations and through analyses of the textbooks. The unit of measurement was the appearance of one of Butts' 10 civic values expressed in a statement or an action. The study found that all 10 civic values were used by both teachers during classroom presentation or discussion, but not all the civic values were demonstrated. The study concluded that citizenship education was taking place; however, using Butts' decalogue to study citizenship education is limited. The study supports the desirability and feasibility of studying citizenship education. (NL)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED320837

MIDDLE SCHOOL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

A Study of Civic Values via R. Freeman Butts' Decalogue

R. Lewis Hodge
Claxton Hall 10
The University of Tennessee
Knoxville, TN 37996

This paper present at the annual meeting of the Americna Education Research Association, 1990, Boston

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
R. LEWIS HODGE
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

SO 020 904

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

MIDDLE SCHOOL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION *

A Study of Civic Values via R. Freeman Butts' Decalogue

R. Lewis Hodge
Claxton Hall 10
The University of Tennessee
Knoxville, TN 37996

PURPOSES. The purpose of this study was to assess the feasibility of using R. Freeman Butts' (1980) decalogue as a construct for studying and imparting citizenship education in middle schools. Subordinated purposes included examining the general nature of citizenship education in a middle school and comparing it with a similar study of citizenship education in an elementary school (Hodge, 1988).

PERSPECTIVE. One of the persistent questions about American public education relates to its purpose. While that question can never be completely answered, it can be approached with questions related to citizenship education because citizenship is probably the most common curriculum element across the nation. If so, clarification of the nature of citizenship education would partially qualify a common purpose in public schools.

One supposition of this research is that in order for the pluralistic United States to enter the 21st century as a leading, democratic nation, there should be some sort of operationalized "citizenship education" being provided by the public schools. Three assumptions influence this research: 1) Democracy is a good thing to practice in this country and to promote throughout the world. 2) The most effective way to promote democracy is to model it: that would include practicing it and making efforts to improve it. It follows that succeeding generations should be trained and educated to do so. 3) The public schools are the best place to

*This paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, 1990, Boston

TM014844

cultivate the will and the way to advance democracy in the pluralistic United States.

There is an increasing curriculum emphasis upon personal attributes. If it continues, schools will be pressured to impart values which cause students to work harder, work more cooperatively, avoid drugs and other vices, and cultivate sundry other virtues (Goodlad, 1984). In short, there is an escalating emphasis upon both character development and citizenship education. The latter may subsume the former because it is 1) embedded in a traditional curriculum--history, and 2) less controversial to deal with from a public school perspective.

The necessity and the nature of citizenship education is explicated by R. Freeman Butts in The Revival of Civic Learning (Butts, 1980). Butts and others have expressed their concern that our pluralistic democracy can be weakened or even lost. They argue that American citizens need to take their democratic citizenship more seriously than in times past in view of the complexity of international politics in general and our nation's lagging economy in particular. One might add that the very existence of the public schools is directly related to the "democratic" state of the union. Indeed, Butts accepts the overarching goal of education as that of preparing informed, thinking citizens. He believes that the ". . .basic ideas and values of democratic citizenship should become the core of knowledge and participation that makes up a curriculum design for the educated citizen . . . Although there will not be universal agreement as to what these key ideas and values are and there is no intent ot impose a single curriculum desing upon all schools in the nation, I think that the profession should be trying much more rigorously and vigorously to become sophisticated and explicit about the substantive ideas and concepts that form the common core of American citizenship" (Butts, 1980, p. 132). Butts offers ten civic values toward this effort.

Butts' decalogue can be briefly summarized as follows. 1) Justice. This value

is prevalent in schemes of values, often at the top of heirarchies of values, e. g., Kohlberg's stages of moral reasoning. Key ideas in Butts' use of the term are fairness, right (more so than good), and equal rights. 2) Freedom. Although an encompassing term, key concepts are dignity and participation. Butts also discusses the conflict between public and private freedoms. 3) Equality. The major ideas are equal opportunity and public education. 4) Diversity. There is a major tension between pluralism and integration; the difficulty of having both is great but possible, though continual compromise may be necessary. 5) Authority. Butts chooses to emphasize legitimate power and the exercise of responsibility. 6) Privacy. Essentially, this is the right of individuals to control the information about themselves which communicated to others. 7) Due process. Even in schools, Butts contends, there should be knowledge of and practice in due process. 8) Participation. It is paramount in democratic societies to interactively deal with ideas and their practices, althoughl the reality of that is limited by the size and complexity of our society. 9) Personal Obligation for the Public Good. Four terms imply this concept very well: loyalty, patriotism, discipline, and duty. 10) International Human Rights. Butts believes we should be thinking about the rest of hte world as well as our own nation. He endorses "global education," and he thinks we need to cultivate a sense of interdependence with other nations. These 10 values are described in The Revival of Civic Learning; he acknowledges the complexity of his proposal; readers can expect to find provocative and countervailing notions.

Following the naturalistic study of one sixth grade Social Studies and one eighth grade American History classrooms, all the information was screened through Butts' decalogue.

SETTING. This study follows a similar study of two third grade classrooms (Hodge, 1988). Like that elementary school, this middle school is located in a metropolitan

community of 320,000 people with a relatively diverse economic base, and serves the fastest growing part of the county. There are still a few semi-rural residences, but most of the students come from suburban neighborhoods of mostly middle and upper SES homes; the district also includes a segment of inner city residences. The 962 students are of several ethnic backgrounds (though mostly white). The family unit ranges from single parent to third generation families. This community could also be described as a politically interested and active one, that is, one which would be generally supportive of "good citizenship."

The administrative staff and faculty reflect the typical suburban school. They are courteous and business-like while maintaining personal variety. The school's reputation as a "good school" is consistent within and without the community, including the students themselves.

The two teachers observed were different in teaching styles. The sixth grade, Social Studies teacher used a direct approach: most of the information presented was through teacher lecture, and discussion was teacher directed. She also used mediated materials and periodically provided opportunities for independent seat work. She was lively in her presentations, moving about the classroom and inserting humor, colorful illustrations and hyperbole. Student behavior that deviated from the norm was quickly addressed and conformed. The other teacher, eighth grade American History, used a more interactive style. She also lectured with overhead, but she was more informal, and student contributions were more frequently spontaneous in her classroom. Student behavior that deviated from the norm was tolerated a time or two before students were really expected to conform.

METHODS. I was a non-participant in a naturalistic setting. The data was collected with field notes made during classroom observations and analyses of the textbooks. An effort was made to collect "decalogue relevant" information, but other information was recorded as well. For the first half of the year, data was totally

narrative; for the last half of the year, a chart similar to Table 1 was used and narration reduced. Both teachers knew that I was observing in order to study "citizenship education", but they were unfamiliar with Butts' decalogue. There were times when their awareness of my purpose seemed to effect what they said, but for the most part, I perceived their classes to be conducted in normal fashion.

Beginning the first day of school, Fall 1988, field notes were made of the ongoing classroom activities, teacher-student interactions, and selective student-to-student interactions. Classroom curriculum (textbooks, worksheets, handouts) were also included in the data collection and analysis. Thereafter, field notes were every week or two with provision to assure sampling of each day of the week. Given normal interruptions to the public school schedule and my time restraints (in this unfunded research), 11 classrooms of each grade level were observed during the school year.

The quantitative unit of measurement was an "occurrence" of one of Butts' ten civic values as expressed in a statement or action. The beginning and ending of occurrences was usually easy to determine, though a few misjudgments may have been inaccurately recorded. In the classroom, verbal language about one of the civic values was labelled Statement, but when something was said or done which demonstrated or enacted the values, it was labelled Demonstration. So each "occurrence" was categorized in two dimensions: 1) according to Butts' ten civic values and 2) according to whether each value was talked about or whether it was demonstrated. (See Table 1, next section, for pattern.) For example, when one of the teachers talked about the constitutional authority of the Supreme Court, her statement was categorized as Statement in Category Five, Authority. But when a student initiated a question about a Constitutional issue, his question was categorized as a Demonstration of Category Eight, Participation. The categorized, total number of occurrences are presented in Table 1, next section.

Two textbooks were analyzed in a manner similar to that of the classroom, but since everything was in print or photo, every "occurrence" was categorized as follows: 1) according to Butts' ten civic values and 2) according to whether the value was mentioned by name, talked about (implied), or illustrated in a photograph or other visual.

FINDINGS. All ten civic values were spoken of by both teachers during classroom presentation or discussion, but not all of the civic values were demonstrated.

TABLE 1

MIDDLE SCHOOL
TEACHER & STUDENT BEHAVIOR AS OF CIVIC VALUES
OCCURRENCES

		Butts' Decalogue									
		Justice	Freedom	Equality	Diversity	Authority	Privacy	Due process	Participation	Pers Obl Pub Good	Int'l Hmn Rts
STATEMENTS	Teacher 1	5	7	14	5	23	1	2	6	7	15
	Teacher 2	13	10	3	6	13	1	1	12	1	1
DEMONSTRATION	Teacher 1	1	1	3	1	2			1	1	1
	Teacher 2	2		1		2			18		

Teacher 1 - - Sixth grade, Social Studies
Teacher 2 - - Eight grade, American History

Significantly, only two of the civic values were mentioned by name--Freedom and Diversity; all of the other Statements are references to or synonyms for the civic values. Obviously, distribution was uneven: of course, there are no standards for

distribution. However, the unevenness invites discussion and speculation. Most of the occurrences were ones related to Authority, especially Teacher 1, who was more authoritarian in style. Some of these occurrences were Statements about the Authority of school officials and government, but a few were statements about the teacher's authority. The teacher who was more interactive, Teacher 2, had twice as many occurrences of Participation and half as many occurrences of Authority as did Teacher 1. One may be tempted to explain these numbers as subconscious expressions of style or personality, but they could also be explained as coincidences related to the subject matter presented. In short, both teachers' classrooms included talk about these two important civic values.

Other civic values received the attention of discourse, but only one was significantly demonstrated, Participation. The majority of these occurrences took place with Teacher 2 in a lesson which began with a presentation of President Taft's administration. Students soon began asking relevant, spontaneous questions about some of the goings-on in his tenure as well as recent matters in Reagan's administration and current events related to banking. Because of the nature of interaction, I labelled them Participation as defined by Butts. However, one of the challenges of working with Butts' decalogue has been deciding whether certain classroom activities are true to his descriptions or whether they are really dictated by classroom regimen. The category, Participation, is the best example of the problem. Technically, one could consider every teacher question and student answer an example of Participation, but realistically, when question and answer sessions follow standard operational procedure (to borrow a military term), they are not true to the spirit of Butts' category, Participation. Therefore, most classroom question and answer sessions have not been categorized Participation. The reader must consider this judgment call in assessing the worth of the findings and in reflecting upon the limitations of applying Butts' decalogue to classroom and

curriculum analysis.

Both the sixth and eighth grade textbooks were significantly more effective in dealing with Butts' decalogue of civic values both in frequency and comprehension. See Table 2 for distribution.

TABLE 2

MIDDLE SCHOOL TEXTBOOK EVIDENCE OF CIVIC VALUES

Butts' Decalogue

		Justice	Freedom	Equality	Diversity	Authority	Privacy	Due process	Participation	Pers. Obl. Pub Good	Int'l Hmn Rts
OUR NATION, OUR WORLD McGRAW-HILL	STMNT		7			1					
	PHOTO	1	(0/-2) 2						1		
	ACTION	(48/-30) 78	(19/-2) 21	(7/-2) 9	(3/-3) 6	(22/-8) 30			(8/-1) 9	5	
AMERICA IS MERRILL (selected chapters)	STMNT	(21-3) 5	(10/-1) 2	2	1	(15/-1) 16		1	1		
	PHOTO		(0/-2) 2	1							1
	ACTION	(96/-38) 134	(28/-11) 39	(19/-13) 32	(3/-5) 8	(33/-3) 36	1	(2/-1) 3	(12/-2) 14	8	2

The numbers in parentheses include positive and negative references to the civic values, and the remaining number is the total. For example, both textbooks frequently mentioned the problem of slavery, which was coded a violation of Justice and, hence, negative Justice; Butts' decalogue makes no distinction between so-called positive and negative occurrences of a civic value, but the distinction seemed appropriate to me. The Justice category is large mostly because of content

related to national and ethnic independence. Note that many of the civic values were actually called by name, which is what the Statement category includes. The teachers rarely mentioned any of Butts' decalogue by name.

The sixth grade textbook, Our Nation, Our World, had fewer occurrences in every category and three categories with no occurrences: Privacy (the eighth grade textbook had only one), Due Process, and International Human Rights. These absences and shortages raise questions which will be addressed in the Discussion.

Unlike the elementary school textbooks which dealt sterilely or negatively with religious and ethnic matters, these provided reasonable and relatively balanced descriptions. However, like the elementary textbooks, the curriculum emphasis was upon testable content; this complaint is well documented, textbook companies stand behind their profit motive, and "everyone" understands the dominance of normative test scores (See Sewall, 1989).

A quick comparison of the occurrences of Butts' civic values in a middle school with an elementary school is provided in Table 3.

TABLE 3

COMPARISON OF ELEMENTARY & MIDDLE SCHOOLS CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR AS EVIDENCE OF CIVIC VALUES OCCURRENCES

	Butts' Decalogue									
	Justice	Freedom	Equality	Diversity	Authority	Privacy	Due process	Participation	Pers Obl Pub Good	Int'l Hmn Rts
STATEMENTS — Elementary	2	1	1		3					
STATEMENTS — Middle	18	17	17	11	36	2	3	18	8	16
DEMONSTRATIONS — Elementary	20	15	4	13	24	2	3	16	6	
DEMONSTRATIONS — Middle	3	1	4	1	4			19	1	1

Data for the elementary school is taken from the study which preceded this one (Hodge, 1989). The major findings of that study were that 1) citizenship education does take place in elementary schools, but it is a relatively small portion of the total education, 2) the school's emphasis upon classroom orderliness rather than long term, adult citizenship resulted in significant variations on Butts' schema, and 3) differences between the school's applications and Butts' definitions need to be considered before building a curriculum around his ten civic values. Note that Authority was the predominant occurrence in the elementary school, also, but it was Demonstrated more so than Stated. Note that all of the civic values were much more frequently Demonstrated than Stated by the elementary teachers. Possible explanation for this are that the elementary teachers taught with an emphasis upon basic skills, these ideas are not easily expressed in simple language, teacher talk may be less in elementary schools, and the personal dimension of an elementary school makes expression of "civic values" more natural.

Other findings may be induced by the reader. When the high school phase of this research is soon completed, a comprehensive analysis of Butts's decalogue as it pertains to public school curriculum will be conducted.

DISCUSSION. One statistic not supplied in Table 1 is the number of occurrences of civic values in comparison to the total number of occurrences in the classroom. Estimating the total number of occurrences would be difficult if not impossible, but readers can have some feel for the relative weight given Butt's civic values when they consider that 22 total classroom periods were observed to produce the maximum of 23 occurrences of Authority Statements and the minimum of one occurrence of each of four civic values--Privacy, Due process, Personal Obligation for the Common Good, and International Human Rights. The preceding applies to Statements; when Demonstration is considered, the generalization is that only one of the civic values was significantly "modeled". Thus, Butts' civic values do not seem to be mentioned

often, and they are seldom provided by example.

This raises the question, Were these middle school teachers failing to teach or impart civic values? Or is Butts' decalogue an inadequate or inappropriate schema for studying civic values?

The difficulty of classifying classroom discourse via Butts can be partially illustrated by the following segment. A student newly assigned to the class was told by the teacher, "Honey, you'll have to return to the office;" the teacher continued with the explanation that she did not know why [name of adult] does this when this class is her only one with 30 students; the student could have been assigned to any other class; the student is told to return to the office to [name of adult], who is probably the one who did this. One could categorize this as an example of Category 1, Justice, because the teacher is concerned with what is fair, what is right. One could label it Category 2, Freedom, because the teacher is exercising her dignity and participating in improving the situation. One could make a case for Category 3, Equality, since assigning the student to another class enhances equal opportunities for the education of all concerned. If one considers Category 5, Authority, one could either see the teacher exercising her authority or challenging the authority of the administration: in the former case, one would so classify it, but in the latter case, one would have to classify a negative occurrence of authority. Category 7, Due Process, may also be applicable because the teacher is exercising a system which appears to be open to her rebuttle. Better cases can be made for some categories than others, but one could conclude that this situation does not manifest the essence of a civic value situation and should not be categorized, which was my concluding decision.

There are other limitations to Butts' decalogue. Some things which are citizenship related are not picked up with Butts' ten civic values. One particular class bore this out. The teacher referenced the school's "citizenship day", the

word citizenship was mentioned several times, an anniversary date of the signing of the Constitution was noted, she spoke glowingly of a recent naturalization ceremony for over 150 citizen, and she made several remarks about the privilege of being an American citizen. None of these was addressed in such a way as to qualify them explicitly for one of the ten categories. A discussion of the qualifications of the United States President brought out the possibility of a woman President, which was tallied for Category 3, Equality, but desirable characteristics and qualifications for the President of a pluralistic democracy did not properly fall into any of the categories. Personal characteristics of good citizens are not addressed except by implication. For example, good citizens should be respectful of others' rights and opinions: references to being respectful are not categorized unless that respect relates to equality (Category 3, Equality) or duty (Category 9, Personal Obligation for the Public Good.) Other characteristics which are not likely to be categorized at all include personal responsibility (responsible exercise of authority is included in Category 5, Authority), integrity, and honesty. These characteristics may bring many others to mind for the reader which would contribute to being citizens with good character, many of which do not fit into Butts' decalogue. (Opposing characteristics, e. g, irresponsibilty, ineptness, and dishonesty, are also overlooked.) This does not void Butts' decalogue, but it substantiates some of the limitations of utilizing the ten civic values for research or applying it to curriculum. A supportive conclusion about the nature of Butts' categories is that they are ideal and intellectually valid; a critical conclusion is that they miss some of the realities of people and public schools. My middle-of-the-road conclusion is that they have intellectual merit but need reconceptualizing to meet the realities of the American public and its schools.

CONCLUSIONS. Citizenship education was taking place; civic values (a la Butts)

were addressed in textbooks and teacher-student dialogue, and some were manifested in classroom behavior. However, like the elementary school's version of citizenship education, institutional maintenance ("order in the classroom") resulted in emphases and applications which differed from Butts' construct; also, significant civic values are precluded from the categories Butts has established. Unlike the elementary school study, middle school citizenship education was much more a part of the language and the stated curriculum, but it was less well modeled.

The use of Butts' decalogue to study citizenship education is limited. The ideas can be validated with reason and history, but they have proven to be somewhat esoteric for public schools. People with commitments to civic education and greater familiarity with public schools are needed to do two things: 1) reconsider Butts' schema in every regard from breadth to the mutual exclusivity of the categories and 2) translate the best ideas into more functional concepts and terms. Based upon the spirit of his writings, I think Butts would welcome challenges to his decalogue, but he would probably argue for its inclusion in the dialogue about a citizenship curriculum--which he sees as necessary for the betterment (and others would say, survival) of this country.

Perhaps we educators have proceeded with the premise that a good education will foster the logical conclusion among students that a policital democracy is a given. That premise may be false. Perhaps a better premise is that American public school students will not struggle to sustain a political democracy without being inculcated by a public school system to do so. Furthermore, as schools are pressured to raise personal along with academic performance, studies of <u>citizenship education</u> will be essential. This study supports the desirability and the feasibility of studying <u>citizenship education</u>.

REFERENCES

Butts, R. Freeman. The Revival of Civic Learning. Bloomington: Phi Delta Kappa, 1980

Drewry, Henry N., Thomas H. O'Connor, and Frank Freidel. America Is. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1978.

Goodlad, John I. A Place Called School: Prospects for the Future. New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1984, Page 239.

Hodge, R. Lewis. Elementary Citizenship: A Study of Civic Values via R. Freeman Butts' Decalogue. ED Number 299 193. 1988.

Martelli, Leonard, Alma Graham, June Tyler, Rosemary Messick, Cleo Cherryholmes, and Gary Manson. The World. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1983.

Sewall, Gilbert T. "Textbooks Shape Lives and Understandings." Social Studies Review, Number 1, Spring 1989, pages 1-4.